

9/7/84

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PROG 09/07/84

AMB:FVORTIZ

POL:JJCARRAGHER:MH/JMR

ADCM:SVALLIMARESCU, PQL:RBHOWARD, POL:JDEVINE

AMB DCM POL-3, DAO ECON USIS, MILGP RF CHRON

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

SECSTATE WASHDC, PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PN

USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA

CINCSO FOR INTAFF

CINCLANT ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR

TAGS: PGOV, MARR, AR

SUBJECT: GOVERNMENT/MILITARY RELATIONS:

- GOOD NEWS FOR THE FORCES

1. [REDACTED] - ENTIRE TEXT)

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/TPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date Declassify on Reason

DAO:CBARNUM

26 F93
46/293

SECRET

2. SUMMARY: THE SENATE APPROVED ALL MILITARY PROMOTIONS
SUBMITTED BY THE GOVERNMENT. ARMED FORCES PAY SCALES
ARE READJUSTED TO GIVE SOME MILITARY LARGER PAY
INCREASES FOR AUGUST THAN THE OFFICIALLY DECREED 18
PERCENT. TALK OF AN AMNESTY IS GATHERING MOMENTUM.
END SUMMARY.

SECRET



REF ID: A68070

3. GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO SATISFY WHAT IT REGARDS AS LEGITIMATE MILITARY CONCERNS ACCELERATED IN THE PAST FORTNIGHT. REMOVING A LONG-STANDING BURR TO GOVERNMENT-MILITARY RELATIONS, THE SENATE ON AUGUST 31 UNEXPECTEDLY APPROVED ALL ADMINISTRATION PROPOSED PROMOTIONS IN THE THREE FORCES. EMBASSY SOURCES AND REPORTS EARLIER SUGGESTED AS MANY AS TWENTY OFFICERS IN THE ARMY AND NAVY WOULD BE DENIED SENATE AGREEMENT. SENATE PERONISTS OBJECTED TO EIGHTEEN NAMES AND RADICAL SENATORS REPORTEDLY HAD THEIR OWN HIT LIST. TWO CRITICAL DEVELOPMENTS OVERRODE THOSE OBJECTIONS, HOWEVER. FIRST, PRESIDENT ALFONSIN, AS HE IS INCREASINGLY FORCED TO DO TO OVERCOME THE UCR'S INTERNAL DIVISIONS, INVOKED PARTY DISCIPLINE AND ORDERED THE RADICAL BLOC TO SUPPORT THE ENTIRE ARMY AND NAVY LISTS. (AIR FORCE PROMOTIONS WERE APPROVED WITHOUT DISPUTES TWO WEEKS EARLIER.) SECOND, THE BLOC OF PROVINCIAL PARTY SENATORS AGREED TO VOTE WITH THE UCR. EXPLAINING THE PROVINCIAL GROUP'S POSITION, SENATOR CARLOS GOMEZ CENTURION (SAN JUAN) REPORTEDLY SAID, "THE PRESIDENT OF THE NATION IS THE COMMANDER OF THE ARMED FORCES AND IF HE FORWARDED THOSE PROMOTION LISTS, WE SUPPOSE THEY WERE SUFFICIENTLY ANALYZED TO ASSURE THAT NAMES OF MILITARY OFFICERS FACING JUDICIAL ACTION WERE NOT SENT."

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4. MINISTER OF DEFENSE RAUL BORRAS' MILITARY ADVISER, AND LONG-TIME FRIEND OF PRESIDENT ALFONSIN, RETIRED NAVY CAPTAIN BORIS MARIENHOFF (PROTECT), TOLD THE EMBASSY'S POL/MIL OFFICER SEPTEMBER 6 THAT THE SENATE ACCORD WILL IMPROVE ARMED FORCES MORALE. "NOW," HE CONTINUED, "WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH SALARIES." THE MOD STARTED TO ATTACK THAT PROBLEM IN AUGUST BY ADJUSTING THE SALARY SCALES FOR SOME RANKS SO THAT THOSE MILITARY PERSONNEL RECEIVED MORE THAN THE GOVERNMENT-DECREED 18 PERCENT RECEIVED BY ALL WORKERS. MARIENHOFF STATED THAT THE MOD BELIEVED ARMED FORCES SALARIES WERE STILL TOO LOW AND IT WOULD SEEK FURTHER INCREASES IN MONTHS TO COME.

5. SPECULATION ABOUT AN AMNESTY FOR ACTIONS TAKEN UNDER ORDERS DURING THE PROCESS GOVERNMENTS BURST DRAMATICALLY INTO THE PUBLIC DEBATE LATE LAST MONTH WHEN ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF RICARDO PIANTA TOLD REPORTERS THAT "AN AMNESTY COULD BE A BASE, A POINT OF DEPARTURE TO ACHIEVE THE RECONCILIATION OF ALL ARGENTINES." PIANTA'S REMARK DETONATED A VERBAL AVALANCHE, INCLUDING CALLS FOR HIS DISMISSAL FROM SOME LEGISLATORS AND A DENIAL THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONSIDERING AN AMNESTY FROM INTERIOR MINISTER TROCCOLI. MORE INTRIGUINGLY, THE "BUENOS AIRES HERALD" CITED "A RELIABLE GOVERNMENT SOURCE," WHO REPORTEDLY SAID THE GOVERNMENT WAS STUDYING "SOME LEGAL DEVICE" TO PROTECT SERVICEMEN WHO WERE "FOLLOWING ORDERS. . . AND NOT DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE EXCESSES COMMITTED." MARIENHOFF ALSO SHOWED THE AMNESTY CARD IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH POL/MIL OFFICER, SAYING THAT AMNESTY MIGHT BE A POSSIBILITY "AFTER SOME ARE SENTENCED" FOR PROCESS ACTIONS.

DECLASSIFIED

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6. COMMENT: TAKEN SEPARATELY, NONE OF THESE DEVELOPMENTS WILL SNUFF MILITARY DISCONTENT, BUT TOGETHER THEY ADDRESS SOME OF THE ARMED FORCES' MOST IMMEDIATE COMPLAINTS. WE BELIEVE THE ACTIONS REFLECT MOD WILLINGNESS TO RESPOND TO ITS FORCES' LEGITIMATE CONCERNS AND HAVE NO EVIDENCE THAT THEY CONSTITUTE AN IMPROVISED EFFORT TO HEAD OFF SOME MILITARY MACHINATION, BUT WE CANNOT CATEGORICALLY RULE OUT THAT POSSIBILITY. THE GOVERNMENT-MILITARY RELATIONSHIP IS TENUOUS AND WILL REMAIN SO.

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7. ANY PROPOSAL FOR AN AMNESTY WOULD LIKELY REQUIRE ALL OF PRESIDENT ALFONSIN'S POLITICAL ACUMEN TO GAIN PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE. IN THIS REGARD, MARIENHOFF'S REMARK HAS A RING OF CREDIBILITY--AMNESTY MIGHT SELL BETTER ONCE JUNTA MEMBERS AND NOTORIOUS HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS ARE TRIED, CONVICTED AND INCARCERATED, BUT THIS IS UNLIKELY TO OCCUR BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR AT THE EARLIEST. THE PURPORTED USE OF THE PHRASE "SOME LEGAL DEVICE" MAY SUGGEST THAT IF THE GOVERNMENT ACTS TO PROTECT SERVICEMEN WHO ACTED UNDER ORDERS IT MAY DESCRIBE ITS DECISION IN SOME LESS EMOTIONALLY CHARGED WORD THAN "AMNESTY." IT MAY BE SIGNIFICANT (OR AN EXCESS OF OPTIMISM) THAT IN HIS MOST RECENT CONVERSATION WITH US, DEFENSE UNDER-SECRETARY JAUNARENA IS ALREADY DESCRIBING THE PAY AND AMNESTY ISSUES AS TRANSIENT SOLUBLE WITH TIME AND LESS IMPORTANT THAN THE FUNDAMENTAL, LONGER RANGE GOAL OF RESTRUCTURING THE ARMED FORCES. ORTIZ##

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